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HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT Tuesday, July 5, 1932.

(NOT FOR PUBLICATION)

Subject; "Canning Questions." Information from the Bureau of Home Economics, U.S.D.A.

--ooOoo--

Before the summer gets a day older, I must answer those canning questions coming in on every mail. I'm hoping that the answers I give today will save you the bother of writing for the information.

We're going to talk about canning the early fruits and vegetables today. Later in the summer we'll discuss peaches and pears and tomatoes and corn. But right now we have the berries and cherries to think about as well as early vegetables like peas and snap beans.

By the way, have you a reliable time table and temperature guide for canning? You need one to make sure your products are safe from spoilage. Unfortunately the home economists say that not all time tables in circulation are reliable. If you haven't a time table and temperature guide, please write me and I'll see that you get one worked out by specialists at the Bureau of Home Economics.

The first question today is about canning berries.

"Dear Aunt Sammy: How can I put up berries and cherries so they won't separate from the sirup and float on top of the jar? If my fruits do float, does this affect their quality?"

Here's what the canning experts answer:

"No. Fruits that float in the jar are just as good as those that don't. And when they are turned out to serve, you'll never know the difference. But most of us want the satisfaction of putting up attractive looking jars. Also, there's an economy point involved--that is, to get all the fruit possible into each can.

"Cooking shrinks berries. Fruit that fills a can when raw shrinks down about one-third or more when sterilized. So, if you want full containers and want to keep the berries from floating, first heat them through with just enough sugar to make them taste good. Add only a very, very small quantity of water, just enough to keep them from scorching. Then pack the hot fruit into the hot containers, seal them up, and process them for five minutes in a bath of boiling water. Or, if you prefer, you can process glass jars of berries in the oven. But if you do process in the oven, seal the jars only partially, or the steam collecting inside will spoil the perfect seal."

Now here's a question about using tin cans in putting up berries.

"Is there any special kind of tin can that should be used for canning berries?"

Answer. "Indeed there is. If you are canning berries, cherries or any other red acid fruit, use the cans with a special enamel lining called "R" or sanitary enamel. When these red fruits are put into plain tin cans they are likely to fade soon. There's a harmless chemical reaction that causes the fruit to lose its attractive red color. And, by the way, the lining of these "R" or sanitary enamel cans looks like bright gold. Don't confuse them with the enameled cans disignated as "C", which have a dull gold-colored lining and are used for canning sweet corn, green peas and lima beans."

There's more to this story of loss of color. You know that fruits often fade in glass jars. That's why the specialists say that if you can red fruits in glass, keep the jars in the dark to prevent the fruits from fading. You know those heavy paper cartons that the jars come in. They make convenient storage containers for the canned fruit. Of, if you keep your canned products on shelves in a cool, dry cellar, hang a curtain of oil cloth in front of the shelf to shut off the light. But however you manage it, store all cans of red fruits in a cool, dark place.

Several homemakers have written to ask about canning fruits without sugar for use in special diets or for some other special purpose. "Do fruits canned without sugar keep?" my correspondents want to know.

The canning specialists say they do if you can them properly. Heat the fruit first, simply leaving out the sugar, and pack hot into hot containers. Process in the usual way. If you need more liquid to fill up the cans, use hot fruit juice. Sometimes you can get this juice from very ripe fruit, too ripe to can whole.

Suppose somebody asked you the main points about canning the early vegetables--asparagus, perhaps, or peas, or snap beans. What would you say?

Here's what the specialists say:

"The one thing never to forget in canning asparagus, peas, snapbeans and all the other non-acid vegetables is that they need processing at a higher temperature than that of boiling water. We recommend processing asparagus and peas and snap beans in the steam pressure canner at 240 degrees F. That is 22 degrees above the temperature of boiling water. The steam pressure method reduces the chances of spoilage. As an economy measure and as a safety measure, we recommend it.

"And here again we use the hot pack. After you pick over and wash the vegetables boil them for a few minutes in water and pack them hot into the containers. Add salt and the boiling liquid to fill the jar. Then seal and process in the steam pressure canner. The exact time to process varies for different vegetables. The hot-pack method combines all the advantages of the open-kettle method plus those of the cold-pack."

So much for the canning questions. If you want tables of time and temperature please write me. If you want a canning bulletin, please write me. You

haven't forgotten the name of the canning bulletin, have you? It's called "Canning Fruits and Vegetables at Home," Farmers' Bulletin 1471-F.

By the way, I hope you're starting the season with a good pair of tongs or some other handy implement for lifting the hot cans out of the pressure cooker. Tongs are so convenient for lifting out the hot tin cans when the processing is over and then plunging the cans immediately into cold water. Tongs are convenient for handling the hot glass jars also. You first lift out the jars and set on the table while you make a complete seal. Then you set them away to cool out of a draft. Before you store them away, turn them upside down to test the seal. Of course, you are in the habit of dating and labeling all your canned products, whether they're put up in glass or tin. This is an excellent way to keep tab on each lot and make sure it's keeping.

By the way, those tongs for lifting out the hot jars come in handy many other times in cooking, for example, you can lift ears of corn out of the hot water with tongs much more easily than you can spear them with a fork. And, these tools are just as useful on picnics to lift hot things off the coals, to remove the lid of the camp coffee pot, and so on.

Cousin Susan often says that stains like flowers come in season. Certainly canning season brings its own special stains and, alas, often a lot of them. You know how it goes. No matter how careful you are, there's always a chance of spilling fruit juice on your apron or splashing it on your frock. The only thing to do is to be ready for the stains if they come, to know exactly how to remove them.

The most important rule for taking out spots and stains is: Act immediately. Prompt action not only saves time and effort but may also save your dress. Practically all fruit stains are easy to take out when they're fresh and still moist. But after they have dried or, worse still, after they've been laundered or ironed in, they're likely to be very stubborn.

What takes out fresh fruit stains? A very simple remedy--boiling water. Just stretch the stained part of your garment loosely over a bowl. Hold it on with a rubber band, if that makes the stain-removing operation easier. Then lift your tea kettle two or three feet above the bowl and pour the boiling water directly on the stain. The force and heat of the water will remove the spot in a twinkling.

Perhaps you've noticed that peach stains and stains from red or purple berries are particularly hard to get out, once they've dried. Such stains are often set by soap and other alkaline substances. The red color generally changes to a green or blue and becomes very stubborn indeed. As most fruit stains are set by alkalis, be on the safe side and avoid using soap on the garment until you've removed the stains.

Fruit stains are more difficult to remove from silk and wool fabrics than from cotton or linen. If the material is white, you can use oxalic-acid solution. For delicately colored fabrics, try sponging with a ten per cent solution of acetic acid. Stronger chemicals would take out the color of the fabric. Still another stain-removal method for use on silk or wool fabrics is sponging with a little hydrogen peroxide, made slightly alkaline with ammonia.

Tomorrow we'll make plans for a summer company breakfast.